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ABSTRACT

North Central Bible College (Minnesota) has implemented a faculty development program over several years despite restricted financial resources. North Central Bible College (NCBC) is an independent, primarily residential college that is owned and operated by a group of 11 Assemblies of God districts. It offers bachelors degrees in 22 majors and enrolled 1,535 students in Fall 1993. The faculty is relatively young. Although NCBC does not offer tenure, it does have a faculty security program. NCBC's commitment to faculty development has been demonstrated in the Board of Regents' practical and symbolic gestures, and in leadership and encouragement by the President's Cabinet, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and department chairs. Most importantly the faculty themselves have demonstrated commitment to their own development and growth. Creative institutional initiatives have been directed by principles that include clear purpose, flexibility, balance, measurable goals, creativity, cooperation, ownership, accountability, relevance, and rewards. Examples of actual program components include new faculty orientation and mentoring, campus-based faculty development activities, provision of in-service stipends, professional membership stipends, benefits for part-time faculty benefits, sabbatical leaves, promotion policies, annual evaluation, and an annual personal conference by the Vice President of Academic Affairs with each faculty member. (JB)

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Creative Faculty Development in Times of Diminishing Resources

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Make sure of your teachers and forget about everything else.
- Charles Malik

Introduction

The priorities of an academic institution will always be most evident in it's commitment to it's faculty. Whether inside or outside the academy, everyone acknowledges that the caliber of the educational process rises or falls with them.

No one would debate the increased need for the development of the faculty in our institutions. In The Fifth Discipline, Peter Senge describes the "Learning Organization" as "The team that became great didn't start off great - it learned how to produce extraordinary results" (Senge, p.4). Describing the successful corporation of the 1990's Arie De Geus, head of planning for Royal Dutch/Shell observes, "The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage" (Senge, p.4). Faculty members of the academy as well as business leaders in the marketplace **must** keep on learning.

Unfortunately, the tuition for faculty development is extremely high and all around us the "cupboard is almost bare" (Altman, p.29). We have faced (and continue to face) that challenge at our college. At some institutions limited resources can create considerable tension among the faculty and administration (Baker, p.1ff). The purpose of this presentation is to describe 'creative faculty development in times of diminishing resources.' The topic will be divided into three (3) parts: 1. Institutional Overview; 2. Philosophical Commitments; 3. Creative Institutional Initiatives.

I. Institutional Overview

♦ Historical Perspective

North Central Bible College (NCBC) is an independent, co-educational undergraduate primarily residential college with a strong liberal arts core located in downtown Minneapolis,

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Minnesota. Founded in 1930 with a three-year program, curriculum offerings were expanded in 1955 to include a four-year degree with accreditation by the American Association of Bible Colleges. Growth continued resulting in regional accreditation by NCA in 1986. NCBC is a church-related college owned and operated by 11 Assemblies of God (a denomination affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals) districts in the upper midwest in which there are approximately 1600 Assemblies of God churches.

♦ Curriculum

North Central offers the BA and BS degrees in 22 different majors as well as several diploma, associate and certificate programs. The four year degree has three components: the Liberal Arts core, the Bible/Theology core, the Vocational core. Classes are offered day, evening and weekend. The Elementary Education Program enjoys certification by the Minnesota Department of Education. Several cross-town agreements exist with other local colleges. We also provide a correspondence degree through Carlson Institute, our non-traditional program.

♦ Students

Fall 1993 enrollment was 1535 (1059, traditional, on campus; 476, correspondence and non-traditional). This represents a growth of 1134 students since 1975. 75% of our graduates are presently in church vocational positions in the U.S. and around the world. 85% of our students are from Assemblies of God churches and the median age is 21. 15% are married.

♦ Faculty

The faculty team is relatively young thereby creating unique challenges for faculty development. In 1975 there were only 15 full-time teaching faculty with only one earned Doctorate. Today, all of the current 31 full-time teaching faculty, 13 full-time administrative faculty, and 4 officers have been hired since 1975. The President, who is in his 20th year, leads employee longevity.

Academically, the faculty have made significant progress. 48% have completed their doctorates or are at doctoral candidacy (9 completed; 6 candidates). In two (2) years there will be 16 doctorates (52%) with at least four (13%) more on doctoral programs. Four additional administrative faculty have doctorates.

The college does not have tenure. A modified faculty security program has been operating successfully for over 15 years.

We are entering a time of the "graying" of our faculty. Great strides in faculty development have taken place but much remains to be done.

II. Philosophical Commitments

When the adult learner is discussed, two conflicting views surface. On the one hand, main street Americans view the adult learner as less capable than younger learners as captured in "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." On the other hand, adult learners are seen by some as super learners. The same two (2) extreme views could apply to faculty development. According to Huey Long, "the truth about adult learners rests somewhere between the negative stereotype and the super learner idea..." (Long, p.23). Faculty also rest somewhere within these extremes. We must demonstrate a balanced philosophical commitment if we are to enable our faculty to keep on learning. How can that be done?

♦ Board of Regents

Unless faculty development becomes a priority of the governing board of the college, it will be shuffled down the steps into the basement. The board demonstrates it's commitment by the many practical decisions and symbolic gestures it makes each year. Although our faculty salaries still need improvement, since 1976 there have been increases every year except one for a total of 97% combined salary increase. Our board warmly reviews faculty promotion and sabbatical requests and as yet has turned down none.

♦ President's Cabinet

The President's Cabinet (President; 4 officers; 1 faculty representative) is the primary administrative committee at NCBC. All requests for sabbatical leave, faculty promotion and other significant faculty development initiatives are processed through the Cabinet. The faculty must feel the Cabinet's prioritization surrounding issues of faculty development.

♦ Vice President, Academic Affairs

The chief academic officer at NCBC chairs the Faculty Development Committee. He seeks to function "hands on" with personal growth. The annual review for all full-time faculty includes a personal, in-depth conference. Hiring practices include primary consideration of faculty with potential for growth. Without his leadership, faculty development, at best, will be very weak indeed.

♦ Department Chair

The department chair provides the day by day, semester by semester, year by year hands on faculty development leadership on the front lines with each faculty member in the department.

♦ Faculty

Our faculty are passionate about their own development and, as a result, they would agree with John Rodes when he calls 'faculty development' as sounding "somewhat uncouth" (Rodes, p.111). Regardless of our limited institutional resources, they reveal a commitment to personal growth and altruistic service. Unless the faculty identify with their need for development, no amount of programming or resources will help them grow. Even with limited help, however, if they believe in faculty development, nothing will be able to stop them.

♦ Constituents

A growing number of donors are committing themselves to help our faculty grow. Alumni, business persons and churches are giving significant resources to improve faculty quality.

The academic tide rises slowly. The degree to which an institution is philosophically committed to faculty development will be directly proportionate to the improvement of academic quality within it.

III. Creative Institutional Initiatives

If faculty development occurs, an institution needs to articulate the principles and programs which make that a reality.

♦ Principles Behind Faculty Development Efforts

1. **Clear Purpose:** Individual faculty development must be consistent with the statement of mission of the institution.

2. **Lots of Flexibility:** Adequate freedom should be given for each faculty member to evolve and grow according to one's unique needs.

3. **Wholistic Balance:** Optimum faculty development occurs when the whole person is involved in the developmental process.

4. **Measurable Goals:** Without measurable goals, faculty development aims everywhere and no where and accomplishes little that is significant.

5. **Creativity:** Innovation and experimentation blossom when personal creative dreams are cultivated.

6. **Cooperation:** The faculty grows collectively and individually. The classroom, faculty lounge, or lunch at the Pizza Hut become places of mutual meaningful exchange.

7. **Ownership:** Faculty development designed by the faculty will be owned by the faculty. If they do not own it, they will disown it.

8. **Accountability:** One of the realities of '90's is the emerging accountability of faculty for their performance to the numerous institutional constituents. A working faculty development program convinces constituents of the growing contribution of the college.

9. **Relevance:** Never has there been a greater demand for faculty to be relevant than today. Our world is in the midst of enormous change as can be noted by the words of Jayne Bryant Quinn, "If you are not confused by what's going on today, you don't understand it" (Harvard, IEM, '92). Faculty development must keep faculty relevant.

10. **Reward:** Institutional culture should be permeated with symbolic celebrations of progress. Even though the 'cupboard is almost bare', faculty development must somehow be rewarded. As Covey has said, "What grows is what gets watered" (Covey, p. 97).

♦ Kinds of Faculty Development at NCBC

NCBC has designed a faculty development program which is intended to provide a full-orbed catalogue of services to address the various needs of our faculty. The program is managed by the Faculty Development Committee, administrative and departmental leadership.

The Faculty Development Committee is comprised of five members, one appointed - Vice President/Academic Affairs, and four (4) elected by the faculty. Its objectives are to provide:

1. **New Faculty Orientation and Mentoring:** The new faculty member is thus introduced to the college and initial questions are answered. Human and material resources are provided to aid in achieving a successful first year. The program involves a Welcome Workshop, Faculty Host/Hostess assistance, and Veteran Faculty Mentoring services.

2. **Campus-Based Faculty Development:** This component of the program is designed to provide on-campus, in-service education, training and enrichment opportunities such as the annual Faculty Retreat, Faculty Development Seminars (two/semester), special lectureships, library and computer lab-

services, hosting national and international leaders who are campus guests, etc. A required daily chapel service also cultivates a world view consisted with the values of the college. Many faculty take each other's classes at no cost to the institution.

3. **In-Service Stipends:** $350 per full-time faculty member (as budget allows) is provided to assist with in-service tuition, professional travel, or other expenditures (as approved) for professional or personal advancement.

4. **Professional Membership Stipend:** Valuing faculty members' continual growth and contribution in their respective professional fields and valuing their representation of the college to these professional constituencies, the college provides $100 per full-time faculty member (as budget allows).

5. **Part-Time Faculty Benefits and Security:** Due to the strategic role of our part-time faculty, numerous benefits have been established, i.e. Annual Part-Time Faculty Workshop, Adjunct Status (salary adjustment, pro-rated benefits, priority consideration in hiring, etc.), secretarial support, etc.

6. **Sabbatical Leaves:** Contingent upon the recommendation of the Faculty Development Committee, President's Cabinet and Board of Regents, each full-time faculty member is granted a sabbatical leave, of one kind or other, following each sixth year of teaching, or at a time to be arranged among faculty members that would be more workable. There are several types of sabbaticals available.

   - One (1) semester off at full pay
   - Two (2) semesters off at one-half pay
   - Two (2) semesters in-residence at full pay but with no responsibilities beyond teaching nine (9) credits per academic year
   - Four (4) semesters in-residence at full pay but with no responsibilities beyond teaching nine(9) credits per semester
   - Four (4) semesters in-residence at one-half pay but with no responsibilities beyond teaching (9) credits per academic year.

The full-time faculty benefit package continues during the sabbatical leave.

7. **Faculty Promotion:** Desiring the faculty's continual growth, the college rewards professional accomplishments with promotion in academic rank. Objective and subjective criteria must be met and documented in a Promotional Dossier prepared by the faculty member for institutional approval.

8. **Annual Evaluation:** Annual evaluation is necessary and desirable as a platform for discussion concerning the faculty members' effectiveness and personal ambition. Student, Departmental, Administrative, and self evaluation are all included in this process.

9. **Faculty Growth:** Desiring the continual growth and expansion of each faculty member, the college makes its resources available to help in the achievement of personal and professional goals. An annual personal conference with the Vice President of Academic Affairs aids this objective.

Conclusions

In 1974 the Group for Human Development in Higher Education wrote these words (Astin, et al, p. 86),

> The next decade will not be easy for professors. Economic and social pressures will require a new level of resourcefulness. Faculty will seek to protect their economic interests in a variety of ways, including group action; but ultimately their well-being depends on support for higher education by tax payers, potential students, and donors. Whatever self-defensive measures are required, faculty should place their main hope in programs for professional development. To the extent that faculty development thrives, colleges and universities will have more to offer the public and professors will at the same time find greater satisfaction in their work.

20 years later those words remain applicable. In spite of the diminishing resources available to faculty, creative faculty development has never been more important.

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